

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



ACHIEVEMENTS 1999-2002

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY
TONY RACKAUCKAS**

HIGH PROFILE CASES

The Office of the Orange County District Attorney has handled more than 800,000 misdemeanors and nearly 50,000 felony cases during the last four years. Listed below is a sampling of high profile cases to date:

- ***People v. Allaway.*** Edward Charles Allaway shot and killed seven people on the campus of California State University, Fullerton in 1976. OCDA successfully fought several bids by Allaway to be released from a state mental hospital.
- ***People v. Ghobrial.*** John Samuel Ghobrial molested and killed a 12-year-old La Habra boy and then entombed his dismembered body in cement blocks. The Ghobrial is now sitting on Death Row at San Quentin for this gruesome crime.
- ***People v. Garofalo and People v. Boyd.*** The former Mayor of Huntington Beach Peter Garofalo and Seal Beach City Council Member Shawn Boyd were convicted of numerous conflict of interest charges related to their elected office.
- ***People v. Boyce.*** Kevin Boyce murdered an off-duty Los Angeles Sheriff's Deputy in an execution-style killing during the commission of a robbery. Boyce received the death penalty for taking the life of a peace officer.
- ***People v. Brents.*** Brents murdered a young woman by imprisoning her and allowing her to burn to death. He locked her in a car trunk and then set the car on fire. Brents now sits on Death Row for this horrific crime.
- ***People v. D'Saachs.*** Dino D'Saachs was convicted and sentenced to 26 years to life in prison for his part in the Biofem, Inc. murder-for-hire case. Company executive Patrick Riley was shot in the face during the attempted murder.
- ***People v. Bechler.*** Eric Bechler murdered his wife and then staged her death as an accident at sea. Her body was never recovered. Bechler was convicted and sentenced to life without the possibility of parole for the murder.
- ***People v. Woods, Amos and Sheridan.*** Strip club owner Horace McKenna was murdered in 1989. His former CHP partner Mike Woods paid La Cosa Nostra associate David Amos to kill McKenna. Amos hired the shooter, John Sheridan. The case went unsolved until the OCDA organized crime unit, under the supervision of Chief Don Blankenship, re-opened the investigation.
- ***People v. Guzman.*** Eduardo Guzman, a convicted serial rapist who terrorized Santa Ana neighborhoods for four months, was sent to prison for more than one hundred years for sexually assaulting and robbing 13 women.

UNIT AND DEPARTMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In addition to a consistent record of successful prosecutions, the various units and departments of the Office of the Orange County District have accomplished the following:

- The OCDA Sexual Assault Unit and TrackRS team were instrumental in securing the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1242. This groundbreaking legislation allows blood to be taken from prisoners for inclusion in a statewide DNA database. Substantial work by our attorneys and investigators (including testifying before the State Legislature) proved critical to the passage of this bill.
- The OCDA instituted the SABRE Project (Sexual Assault Backlog Reduction Effort) to collect and analyze biological evidence from sexual assault cases. Through SABRE, OCDA also launched a juvenile sexual offense education program aimed at helping to reduce these crimes among teenagers.
- The OCDA Law and Motion Unit has been aggressive and pro-active in making significant changes to California law to benefit criminal prosecutors, enhance law enforcement, and protect the people of the State of California.
- Through OCDA increased efforts on behalf of victims, the collection of restitution from “deadbeat dads” has increased by more than 300%. Orange County is now ranks as the top county in the state for the collection of restitution.
- The OCDA Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Program has become a national model for protecting children found in homes with illegal methamphetamine labs. The PROACT (meth lab task force) team and DEC team have nearly eliminated methamphetamine labs in Orange County since the inception of the program.
- The OCDA Government and Community Relations Department was created by this administration to enable this office to better reach out to the community. An emphasis has been placed on addressing the needs of the rapidly growing immigrant populations in Orange County and encouraging crime victims and witnesses of all ethnic groups to come forward. The department has also secured \$17 million in grant revenue to fund various programs.
- The OCDA Media Relations Department was created by this administration to assist members of the media with getting information on the hundreds of cases being prosecuted by this office at any given time. The department also works to advocate on behalf of press representatives and facilitate access to courtrooms when needed. In addition, the Media Relations Department is proactive in encouraging reporters to cover stories of interest to the public.
- OCDA staff in the six Branch Courts – Central (Santa Ana), West (Westminster), North (Fullerton), Harbor (Newport Beach), South (Laguna Niguel), Juvenile (Orange) – have developed an unprecedented level of cooperation with the local police departments in the areas of training and investigation.

- At these Branch Courts, many deputy district attorneys volunteer their lunch hour on a regular basis and conduct the **Orange Outreach Program**. This program is an outreach to elementary school children focusing on building self-esteem and self-confidence, and educating students about the criminal justice system.
- The OCDA **Juvenile Crimes Unit** has received grants to assist with the prosecution of sex offenders, serious offenders and major crimes on school grounds. The first grant was awarded two years ago to initiate an innovative program to deal with the increase of juvenile sex offenders. The first of its kind in the state, this program devotes resources to prosecuting and treating sex offenders. The program emphasizes on providing help for the child victims. Along with the juvenile sex offender program, three OCDA prosecutors are specifically assigned to handle serious felony offenses committed by juveniles.
- OCDA developed a partnership with the Orange County Sheriff's Department to run the **School Mobile Resource Team (SMRT)**. An OCDA prosecutor teamed with Sheriff's investigators responds to threats of violence and major crimes on school grounds. This group is taking a proactive approach to promote a safe school environment for our children.
- The OCDA **Consumer Fraud Unit**, responsible for protecting the public against unfair and deceptive business practices, collected nearly one million dollars in fines during the fiscal year ending June 2002.